

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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I N S I D E

Around the CNMI

Around the CNMI

‘Parts needed by CUC available on eBay’



AIRPORT DRILL

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Police and Kosrae International Airport officers performed immediate response techniques during its three-day full-scale airport drill on May 20 as part of the Federal Aviation Administration-Pacific program. The training was jointly coordinated by FAA officials Barry Bayer, Honolulu Fire Transportation officer Ron Simpson and CPA-ARFF chief Stanley Torres Jr.

60th anniversary committee tags 17 tour sites, 7 historical markers

By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO
REPORTER

The Committee for the 60th Anniversary of the World War II Battles of Saipan and Tinian has identified 17 coach tour sites and five historical markers that need sprucing up in preparation for the month-long celebration of the Battle of Saipan and Tinian.

Beautification Committee chair Cynthia Martin said businesses and resident owners are invited to help government efforts in keeping the islands clean for the commemoration event.

The Saipan cleanup is an ongoing project of the government but efforts are now being directed toward cleaning up sites related to the World War II commemoration.

“Saipan needs all the residents’ continuing efforts to keep the island clean and beautiful. While the 60th anniversary celebration events begin officially on June 12, the first cruise ship and visitors will arrive on June 5,” said Martin.

She added that special tours are planned for visitors, including returning veterans and their families. “Businesses and homes on any of these routes are especially important to maintain,” she said.

She urged businesses and residences to remove debris from around their property, trim dead limbs from trees, replace broken signs and fences, remove outdated signs from windows, power wash mold on buildings, signs and fences, mow vacant lots and remove cuttings, remove equipment or damaged cars from sight, clean steps and walkways, re-stripe parking areas, paint or replace

damaged garbage containers, and repaint buildings.

The list of tour sites that businesses and resident owners should take particular concern are areas near the old Japanese hospital, the Sugar King Park, Old Japanese jail, bunker/ Japanese tanks, Japanese bunker, Sugar Dock, Japanese air raid shelter, fuel storage bunkers, As Lito Airfield complex, 27th Infantry, 73rd bomb wing memorial, Hill 500, Susupe Lake area, Kannat Tabla Japanese cannon, U.S. bomb storage bunker, Banzai Cliff, Japanese Last Command Post, Japanese Peace Memorial, Okinawan Peace Memorial, Korean Peace Memorial, and the Suicide Cliff.

Historical markers can be found at the Banzai Cliff, Mount Tapochao, As Lito Airfield complex, Quarter Master Beach Park, Chalan Kanoa Cathedral, and Afetna Beach Park.

Also, the Historical Preservation Office disclosed Friday that it would start the American Memorial Park’s Wayside Exhibit Panels.

According to Genevieve Cabrera, the project was an offshoot of the park’s Visitors Center Exhibit Design Project.

“It incorporates panel narrative [with photographs] at twelve key World War II sites on Saipan. The subcommittee that worked on this project had requested that additional panels be placed on Tinian, but because of budget and time constraints, only the twelve panels for Saipan were selected for completion prior to the 60th Anniversary of the Battles for Saipan and Tinian. The Tinian panels would be installed at a later time,” said Cabrera.

The committee would be

meeting at Mt. Tapotchao on Tuesday at 10am. Presently, there are five panels altogether at the peak —four at the southernmost periphery and one near the statue of Christ.

By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO
REPORTER

Major businesses in the Commonwealth have sounded the alarm on the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.’s inability to provide sufficient power supply due to non-performing power plants in Lower Base.

Legislators also disclosed that power outages are likely to happen all the more now that CUC officials revealed that parts needed for the repair of two Power Plant 2 engines in Lower Base have yet to arrive.

During Friday’s hearing at the House chamber CUC officials said the parts for the power engines are still being manufactured and there is no definite date yet as to when it would arrive on island.

But immediate inquiry made by the Legislature disclosed that the parts—which CUC claimed are designed to be manufactured upon order—are sold over the Internet on eBay at \$200,000 apiece.

“CUC officials said that manufacturers would make the parts when they place the order

and it is still being manufactured. But legislative staffers checked the Internet and found the exact item on eBay. The item is sold at \$200,000. They should check eBay” said a House official Friday.

The oversight hearing was called by the House Committee on Public Utilities, Transportation, and Communication, which is chaired by Rep. Timothy Villagomez, a former CUC executive director.

Also, PUTC officials and members were surprised that the two power plants at Lower Base are up to be decommissioned within the year and are up for privatization.

“Are you saying that the CUC board has already approved to go ahead with the privatization of the power plants?” asked Rep. Arnold Palacios repeatedly during the hearing.

Majority of the CUC board voted to pursue the privatization since summer 2003. CUC board chairman Herman P. Sablan said that CUC is tapping the expertise of Harris Group consultancy on the project.

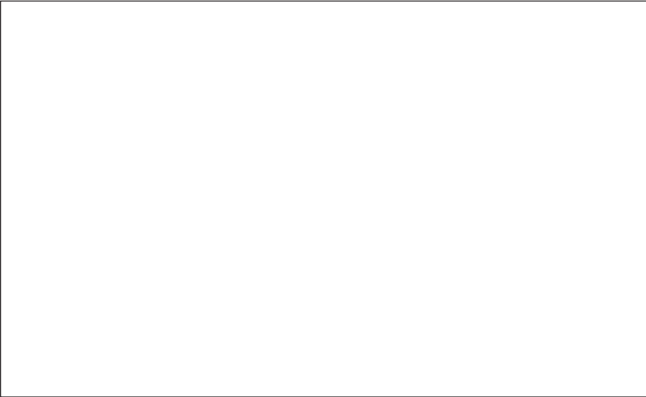
He said the consultant has

completed the scope of work for the project’s Request for Proposal. At this time, Harris Group is looking at the project’s pre-qualification bid.

According to CUC, there is no power crisis but of its four power plants—two in Lower Base, one in Isley Field, which is not operational; and the Puerto Rico power plant, which is being petitioned by local residents to be relocated due to noise and alleged environmental pollution—only two are working. The power plants 1 and 2 are up for privatization.


mcdo

WEATHER FORECAST




PICTURE TIME: 2:25 A.M., DECEMBER 17, 2003
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.


A monsoon trough extends from 6N130E through a tropical disturbance near 8N145E and finally to near 5N160E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms associated with the disturbance are found in the Mariana islands as well as between Yap and Chuuk or between 4N and 16N from 139E to 153E. Just east of the monsoon trough, a surface trough of low pressure continues to near the equator at 168E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are developing north and east of the trough or within 100 miles either side of a line from 9N160E to the equator at 173E, including Kosrae. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms across portions of the Marshall islands, between 4N and 16N from 170E to 180.




SAIPAN AND TINIAN
Cloudy and breezy with scattered showers, some locally heavy, and a slight chance of thunderstorms.
Winds: East at 20-25 mph. Gusting in 35 mph in showers.
Temperature: Lows near 78. Highs near 86.




GUAM AND ROTA
Cloudy and breezy with scattered showers, some locally heavy, and a slight chance of thunderstorms.
Winds: East at 20-25 mph. Gusting in 35 mph in showers.
Temperature: Lows near 78. Highs near 86.




PALAU
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 10 kt.




POHNPEI
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 10 kt.




YAP AND ULITHI
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 10 kt.






















KOSRAE
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Southeast at 10 kt.



CHUUK
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers with a slight chance of thunderstorms.
Winds: Northeast at 10-15 kt.



MAJURO
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.
Winds: East at 10-15 kt.

CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
 Auckland	Cloudy	61F (16C)	49F (9C)
 Beijing	Sunny	44F (7C)	26F (-3C)
 Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	74F (23C)	61F (16C)
 Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	86F (30C)	72F (22C)
 London, England	Cloudy	56F (13C)	45F (7C)
 Los Angeles	Cloudy	69F (21C)	51F (11C)
 Manila	Cloudy	88F (31C)	71F (22C)
 Melbourne	Sunny	73F (23C)	54F (12C)
 Miami	Partly Cloudy	84F (29C)	75F (24C)
 New York, NY	Cloudy	52F (11C)	48F (9C)
 Osaka	Rain	54F (12C)	46F (8C)
 Paris	Cloudy	53F (12C)	41F (5C)
 Pusan	Rain	58F (14C)	43F (6C)
 Rome	Partly Cloudy	55F (13C)	39F (4C)
 Salem, Oregon	Rain	54F (12C)	38F (3C)
 San Francisco	Sunny	64F (18C)	47F (5C)
 Seoul	Rain	52F (11C)	45F (7C)
 Tokyo	Rain	55F (13C)	49F (9C)
 Washington, DC	Cloudy	60F (16C)	48F (9C)

Opinion

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EDITORIAL

South Korea comes of age

South Korea's democracy has reached the point at which protests occur at the ballot box rather than in the streets. The country rid itself of rule by generals less than two decades ago, but the calm acceptance of the impeachment of President Roh Moo Hyun and his recent reinstatement demonstrate a reassuring familiarity with rule by law rather than bayonet.

The National Assembly's quarrel with Roh escalated out of all proportion this year and never should have resulted in impeachment.

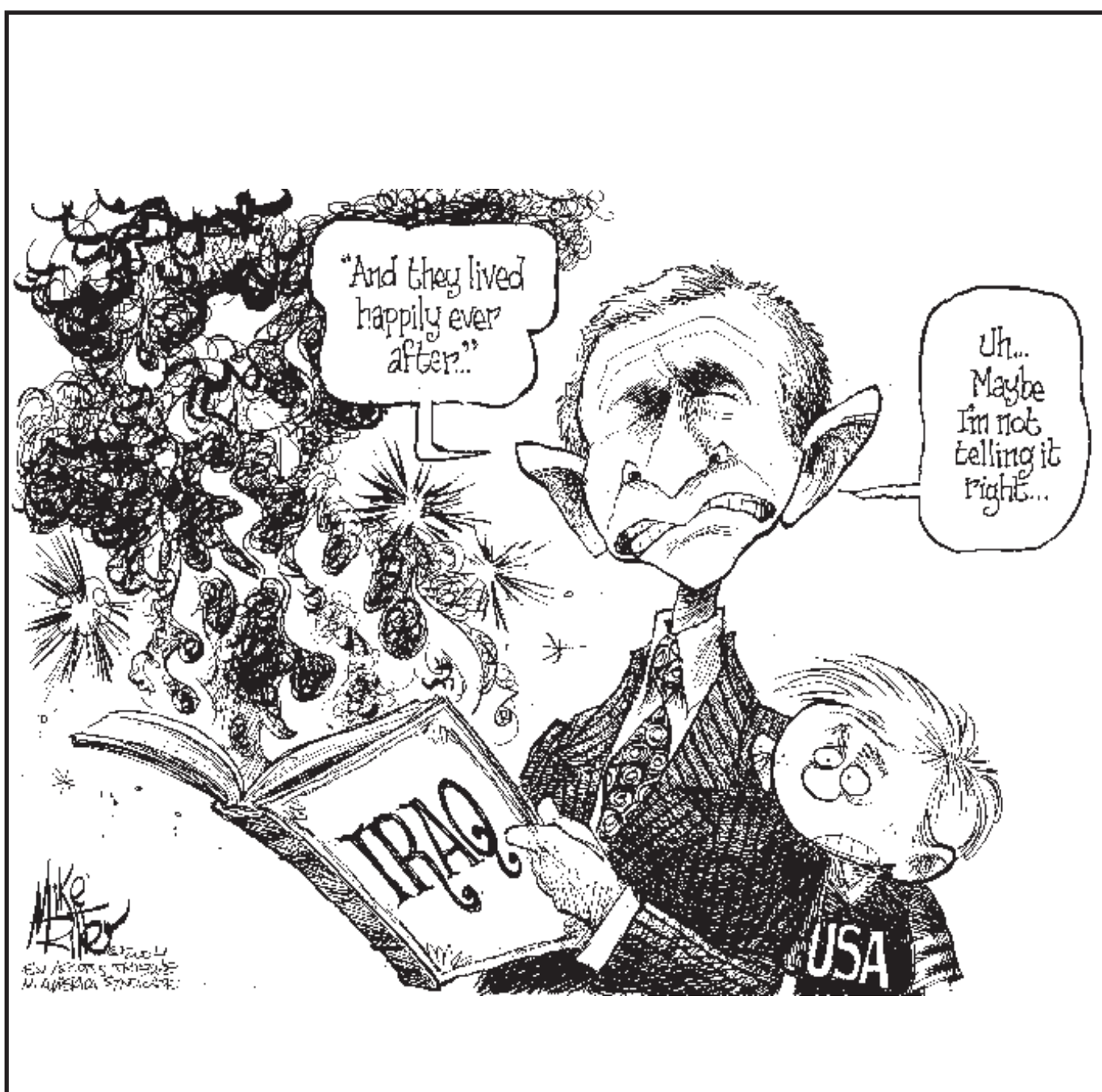
His conservative opponents in the legislature claimed that Roh's remarks in a television interview violated election laws on presidential neutrality. The foes demanded an apology, the president refused and the snowball kept rolling downhill.

After the impeachment forced Roh to let Prime Minister Ko Kon serve as acting president, elections for the National Assembly gave voters a chance for revenge. Roh's supporters won a convincing victory; South Korea will be dominated by leftist parties, for the first time, when the new legislature takes office Tuesday. Little more than a week ago, the Constitutional Court delivered the opinion everyone expected: The impeachment was unjustified.

What's left of the conservative caucus in the legislature will have to find a way to get along with the president if its members want to retain their seats. But Roh should also be more willing to listen to his opponents, especially on the economy. Seoul will need a Plan B if China, South Korea's largest trading partner, follows up on its intention to slow its explosive growth.

Roh has worked to improve relations with Washington and to overcome his pre-presidency reputation as anti-American. Roh took in stride the announcement last week that 3,600 of the 37,000 U.S. troops in South Korea would be transferred to Iraq. South Korea has sent more than 400 army medics and engineers to Iraq, and Roh has promised 3,200 more. How he balances leftist supporters' demands that he not send additional soldiers against conservatives' insistence that he live up to his agreement with the United States may indicate how much of a political lesson impeachment has taught him.

Los Angeles Times



Let's get rid of learning factories

By **HUGH OSBORN** and **MARGARET GAYLE**
Special to The Washington Post

The No Child Left Behind Act may be underfunded, but that is not what is wrong with it. Although it is a well-meaning attempt to bring up the lowest third of our students, its real problem is that it amplifies one of the worst aspects of American education: its mechanical, rote nature.

Early in the last century, foundations set up by industrialists helped design our schools to prepare children for factory lives. Kids were to live by the bell, move through schools as if on conveyor belts and, especially, learn to follow instructions. Then they could work in the rapidly proliferating factories.

But the descendants of these corporate barons have shipped those factories overseas. We have factory-based schools in an Information Age—and no factories. The innovative thinking we need to compete in the global economy is not on the agenda.

This factory-based approach, however, is locked in by political gridlock. The right believes in a back-to-the-basics form of education with strict assessment. The No Child Left Behind Act, for instance, encourages rote learning by aligning highly specified lessons with mechanized tests.

The left, meanwhile, has been open to more enlightened forms of learning, but it also supports the teachers unions, which oppose school choice. The outcome is the worst of both worlds: endless, mechanistic test prep and very limited choice. Our kids are paying the price, as seen in the 30 percent dropout rate.

We can do better than this. Here are five reasonable, common-sense principles on which to rebuild our school system:

□ Engage the students. It is obvious that we learn when interested and motivated, and we don't learn—and are

more likely to drop out—when we are bored. This should shock nobody.

□ Use the power of information technology. Our kids live on technology, which can supply not only the infrastructure for learning but also the spectacular learning techniques developed in the games market. Cognitive researchers are finding that games have become intense learning systems that don't rely on drilling and testing. Stripped of their violence, they are a central part of the solution.

□ Get our kids into the real world. Activities must be designed that encourage expeditions to museums, libraries, parks and historical sites and get children involved in their communities. Kids must not be slaves to tests or their computer screens.

□ Return to social learning. Teachers in our one-room schoolhouses used older students as assistants with younger kids. It worked. The older children derived a sense of self-worth, importance and belonging. They learned social skills, had the powerful learning experience that teaching provides and made learning look cool to younger kids. It made the school a real community—not an age-segregated aberration—and made teaching extremely effective.

□ Use the free market. Web-based publishers should make Internet learning games available directly to parents at reasonable prices. This partial home schooling provides educational choice without the drastic measures of full home schooling, private school or vouchers.

MIT and other universities are working to evolve our thinking about advanced uses of technology in education. America leads the world in scientific research, technology, entertainment and many other areas. Why can't we lead in education?

Osborn is an educational consultant; Gayle is executive director of the American Association for Gifted Children at Duke University.

Letters to the Editor

Saipan Tribune welcomes contributions. All letters intended for publication must include the writer's name, address and, if possible, fax or telephone number. Letters are edited for space, clarity and fairness.

I beg to differ

I am responding to a letter in your Saturday edition, May 29, 2004, written by Mr. John S. Del Rosario, Jr. I feel that Mr. Del Rosario needs to rethink his facts a little. First, Environmental Impact Statements are not made until after a lease or permit is approved. Why would an investor spend tens of thousands of dollars or more (more likely 100's of thousands for a Pagan mining project) on an EIS before they have approval to do the project? If you look at the hotels that were built on public land, each did the required EIS after they had the lease and not before.

Now what is the real purpose of the EIS? It is to help the government agencies, which do environmental regulation, and the developer to make an informed decision on how to proceed with a project with minimum damage to the environment. Almost all projects have a negative impact on the environment and the species that naturally occur there. The purpose of the EIC is to help minimize this impact.

Second, will you quit comparing the mining of Pagan with the mining of phosphate on Nauru. These are different islands with different geology and ecology. Nauru is a raised limestone island, while Pagan is a highly volcanic island. After a volcanic eruption, it can take a succession of hundreds to thousands of years for the climax community to return to the disrupted area. This is what is currently happening on the area around Pagan volcano. I have been to Pagan in 1993, and I know what the area they want to mine looks like. There are no forests there. So mining will not disrupt the natural forest, unlike on Nauru, because there are really none or very little in the area to be mined.

Now to your last question, how to guarantee restoration of Pagan and who will regulate it? This can be built into the contract with Azmar. The contract could be written in a way that would require Azmar to pay for monthly or quarterly inspections by a representative from Department of Lands and Natural Resources or Coastal Resource Management. Second they could be required to hire a full time employee, trained in restoration methods for mined areas, to grow the required plants on site and to manage the restoration. Finally, Azmar can be required to set up a trust fund that would be for the environmental restoration of Pagan. This fund could also help to pay for the inspections and the restoration export.

Finally, we in the CNMI need to look for other funding sources. The Pagan mining project is an excellent one. We the people of the CNMI risk little in developing it and have a chance to make large financial gains. It must be remembered that the textile industry will be closing soon because of the lifting of tariffs on textiles imported into the United States in the very near future. We need to seriously look for other sources of revenue and quit being anti-business!

Howard Cole

Tinian, Marpo Valley

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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By RUTH L. TIGHE

In last week's column, I wrote that House Bill 14-42—Rep. Ray A.N. Yumul's "Alien Workers Act for 2004"—seemed to be anti-business, since it would require nonresident workers to return to their point of origin after their contract expired, thus forcing employers to go through all the expense of bringing in a new worker just to renew a contract.

But a reader noted that the bill is also employee-unfriendly. The reader wrote: "Banning transfers has the net effect of making these people indentured servants to their employer. When you or I are treated unfairly, we look for a new job, file a lawsuit or grievance, or something to that nature." How can someone from the Philippines do this, the reader asked, if transfers are not allowed, and workers must leave the CNMI at the end of their contract? "They can't afford to fly in and out of this place to carry out their claim when they make \$3.05 an hour."

"This bill uses immigration policy to limit lawsuits, and it lets employers abuse employees without the worker being able to change jobs. It is hardly business unfriendly. It keeps the worker in one place unable to shop their services to a better offer," wrote the reader. It is a point well taken.

Thus it would appear the bill is unfriendly to employer and employee both. It seems equally unfriendly to government, inasmuch as the bill runs counter to several provisions of the labor regulation amendments being proposed by the Department of Labor and currently open for public comment. Several sections of the proposed amendments address provisions for transfers; the provisions for contract renewal are based on the assumption that workers are still on island.

It would appear Yumul's bill was drawn up without any awareness of Department of Labor activities or concerns either. Sort of distressing to think a lawmaker could be so out of touch.

In follow-up to my comments on revenue reporting for the poker industry, I have since learned that government revenue is derived both from the simple existence of the machine—that is, a flat annual fee of \$12,000 per machine (on Tinian and Rota the fee is somewhat less) is paid to the government—and from the moneys paid into the machine. The government "take" on that is 5 percent, in the form of business gross receipts tax—or BGRT.

A reader commented that, in assessing the cost-benefit ratio of poker machines, "While it is easy to calculate the revenues from the taxes assessed on each machine, and the GRT from those businesses, the fact is that almost all the money is from local players. If that money wasn't used to play poker it would have been spent elsewhere in the community. It may be hard to figure out exactly where that money would be re-directed and filtered back to the community but nonetheless it would stay here and be spent here."

"The garment industry revenues, on the other hand, represent money that comes into the CNMI from the outside, a real boon to the local GNP although of course, there are costs to subtract. Although I imagine the benefits outweigh the costs, you are right to ask for a cost-benefit analysis on that," the reader continued.

I've admired stances taken by Senator Pete P. Reyes in the past, but the stance he is taking on the governor's veto of three bills that were allegedly authored by the senator doesn't fall into that category. Frankly, I think the senator, in this case, is paranoid. And conversely, while I haven't supported the governor lately, in this case I do. I think his vetoes eminently logical and sensible.

No one would argue about the provision in Reyes' bill, S.B.14-10, that Martin Luther King day be observed in the CNMI. But there is no good argument for the provision that the observance of President's Day be eliminated to make way for it, as Reyes' bill proposed. Particularly when there is such a much more obvious and appropriate candidate: Columbus Day. Columbus' exploits have little direct bearing on the Marianas, whereas

the values and accomplishments of the first U.S. President, George Washington, and its 16th President, Abraham Lincoln, have a great deal of relevance to the CNMI. This bill was rightly vetoed, and should stay vetoed.

There may be more controversy over Reyes' S.B. 14-11, which provides for DNA testing in paternity suits. The bill was vetoed because no funding was provided in the bill for what is an expensive procedure. The veto strikes me as being fiscally responsible—on a small scale, in the overall scheme of things—but nonetheless an appropriately prudent move. The Senate has over-ridden the governor's veto. Let us hope the House, which must also over-ride the veto, is more fiscally prudent.

The third bill, S.B. 14-13, would restrict the Marianas Visitors Authority from hiring nonresident workers. This too would seem fully deserving of veto. As the MVA becomes more involved with courting Chinese tourists, there is bound to be a need for staff with knowledge of and background in matters Chinese. Once again, the House should refuse to go along with the Senate, which has voted to over-ride the governor's veto.

The governor has many shortcomings but I have a hard time believing that he would be so vindictive as to veto bills solely on the grounds that he disliked their sponsor. In the case of these vetoes, the governor had valid, reasonable, legitimate grounds for his action. The good senator should back off.

Short takes:

Though Hollywood hype is always suspect, its figures appear to show that the movie "Shrek 2" is attracting larger audiences, earning more revenue, than even the most optimistic had hoped for. Why are they surprised? Thanks to good writers, good animators, good artists, and no doubt dozens of other contributing talents, "Shrek 2" out-does its predecessor. It builds on the charm of the first one, and with the introduction of a totally captivating new character, is even more delightful, entertaining, and enjoyable than was the original "Shrek."

The only bad part is that Hollywood might be tempted to create a "Shrek 3", and "4," and "5"—or fatuous imitative features—instead of taking to heart the lesson to which those figures testify: that there is a huge, under-served audience out there (which even says it would go see "Shrek 2" again—as I intend to) that is eager for light-hearted, engaging, high-quality, violence- and smut-free entertainment imbued with positive moral values.

On a sterner note, there is a verse in the gospel according to St. Matthew, chapter 18, verse 9, the relevant part of which reads, according to my St. James version, "And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee...." Do you suppose that is what our illustrious president had in mind when he said he wanted the notorious Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq destroyed? What earthly good would that do? Will he destroy the others, in Afghanistan, in Cuba, and who knows where else, where abuse has also occurred? The Iraqi, the people of the U.S., the international community, do not need symbolism. What they need is intelligent actions, based on rational, coherent policies.

Speaking of which, what is there about the Washington (D.C.) administration that is so different from the leadership of other countries? According to an article in the International Herald Tribune earlier this week, the U.S. is now proposing to spend between \$10 billion and \$15 billion to create "virtual borders" around its perimeter in an effort to keep presumed "terrorists" out of the country. The project would use networks of databases and biometric sensors at sites where people apply for visas, so that by the time they reach the physical U.S. border, each visitor will already have been screened by a global web of databases.

Even though other countries are bordered by several unfriendly as well as friendly countries—while the continental U.S. is bordered on two sides by vast bodies of water, on its two other sides by friendly Canada and Mexico—one does not hear of plans of their building equivalent barriers. It seems counter-intuitive to spend billions of dollars to wall off U.S. borders instead of using them to build stronger ties with the rest of the world. Is it possible the U.S. could go bankrupt in its zeal to "terror-proof" its borders—an impossible task in any case?

(The writer is a librarian by profession, and a longterm resident of the CNMI. To contact her, send email to <ruth.tighe@saipan.com>)

Gates of hell congested with potential Kerry voters

By JIM SHEA

The Hartford Courant

The Gates of Hell.
Admitting:
Name, last name first, please?
O'Brien, Tim.

Address, city and state?
Colorado Springs, Colorado.
Why have you been referred here?

I'm Catholic and I was planning to vote for John Kerry.

Oh boy, not another one. See that long line over there? Go stand in it. I gotta try to straighten this out.

Rrrrrrring.

Administration, this is Eva, how may I direct your call?

Eva, Adolf down in Admitting.

Mister Fuhrer, Poopsie, it's been ages, how's tricks?

Same old, same old. Look, is the big guy in? We need him to make some decisions. We're

getting all backed up down here.

Gee, I don't know what to tell you. Mr. Lucifer is on a recruiting trip.

Still, he's been gone for weeks.

What can I tell you, hon, he's really impressed with this Donald Rumsfeld guy.

Who isn't down here? But I'm telling you we have a looming bureaucratic nightmare on our hands.

Why don't you tell me what the problem is and I'll pass it on.

OK, well there's this new Catholic bishop out in Colorado Springs, his name is Sheridan. And he's telling his people that if they vote for a politician like Kerry, who supports abortion rights, stem-cell research, euthanasia or same-sex marriage, they can't receive communion.

Let me guess: Kerry supporters are taking communion anyway.

You got it, and now we're running into a big problem when they die.

Which is?

Well, in the past these types of retirees went directly upstairs for review and usually we never saw

them again. But now Peter's got his people turning them away because he doesn't want to upset the clergy any more than he has to these days.

I can understand Peter's position. We have been handling a lot of defrocks the last few years. What I'm not getting is why you don't just process the Kerry referrals and be done with it?

Because we have our standards. Kerry people may be liberals, even look a little French, but they're really aren't hell material.

True, it's not like they're Nader-ites.

Exactly.

You're right, Poopsie, this could become a major headache. What if all the American bishops started doing it? Or what if this Bishop Sheridan decides to tell his people they can't receive communion if they don't vote for President Bush?

Isn't that what he's doing?

You know, let me see if I can get Mr. Lucifer on his cell.

Shea is a columnist for The Courant.

Our World At War

Liberation Fest kicks off with a blast

By SHAN SEMAN
REPORTER

The 2004 Liberation Festival kicked off with a blast last Friday night at the grounds of the Garapan Fishing Base, opening a month-long celebration that commemorates an event that took place 60 years ago: the day the United States opened up the camps where Saipan residents had been confined during World War II.

Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela, who took the lead in opening up the festivities, promised a different Liberation Day festivities.

"This year's Liberation Day Festivities will be different...not because of the change of venue, but because this year marks the 60th anniversary of the Battle of Saipan," Tudela said in his welcoming remarks. "Before this year's festivities end on July 4, we will have been visited by many veterans of that great battle. To us, every veteran is a hero, and we hope that as they return to visit their former battle sites, they will find that our island has since been reborn as a beautiful tourist destination and a peaceful place to live in."

This year's theme is "Strength in unity and diversity."

Mayor Juan B. Tudela, second from left, poses with Father Ryan Jimenez, second from right, and Liberation Fest chairman Victorino Cepeda during the opening ceremony last Friday at the Garapan Fishing Base.

SHAN SEMAN

The Carolinian Warriors entertain the crowd with traditional dances during last Friday night's Liberation Festival at the Garapan Fishing Base.

SHAN SEMAN



SHAN SEMAN

The ceremony was kicked off with the posting of colors.



Sheyvon Aldan poses with family members during the opening night of the 2004 Liberation Festival.

SHAN SEMAN

Tudela touched on the island's various ethnic groups, saying the rich rainbow of cultures and nationalities give Saipan a unique strength and unity "because of our diversity."

The ceremony also served as a formal introduction of the eight candidates who make up this year's Liberation Day Royal Court.

Vying for this year's reign as Liberation Day queen are Nadia Manglona, Sweeda Glad, Myla Capilitan, Sara Igisaiar, Heather Woodruff, Monarie Cabrera, Leiana Ogumoro, and Sheyvonne Maratita.

Each candidate is currently selling tickets in hopes of earning the coveted title. The candidate selling the most tickets and raising the most money will be crowned queen.

According to Tudela, the counting of money raised is set for June 19.

Glad and Capilitan headed the singing of the National Anthem while Ogumoro, along with local artist Vina Claire "Sashuram" Saures led everyone in singing the CNMI Anthem.

The festival features various entertainment, rides, and vendors.

Meet your 2004 Liberation Day candidates

By SHAN SEMAN and CASSIE FEJERAN
REPORTERS

Leiana K. Ogumoro

Miss Northern Marianas Beauty Pageant 2004 Miss Photogenic, Lady Leiana, daughter of Felicidad and Ambrosio Ogumoro, is one of the many candidates running for the 2004 CNMI Liberation Queen.

This Northern Marianas College student is taking that extra mile to reach out to the community and support the people. She intends on beautifying the island by performing community services and getting others involved as well. Referring to the island culture, Ogumoro said people should keep the lessons of the past to pass these on to the future. She represents the Refaluwasch Foundation and community.



Nadia B. Manglona

The daughter of Fortunato and Julita Manglona, Lady Nadia represents the island of Rota and the Rota High School JROTC.

The Sinapolo I resident aims at one day enrolling in college and pursuing a degree in math and psychology.



Myla Grace Capilitan

Representing the Filipino community, Myla joins the 2004 Liberation Queen candidates. Myla is the daughter of proud parents Rudolfo and Linda Capilitan. This Ms. Philippine CNMI 3rd runner-up also received the photogenic and best in sports wear award.

Capilitan aspires to learn more about Saipan's other ethnic groups and learn new things through the Liberation Day royal court. She plans on starting a program that would help kids and young adults discover their talents and put them to good use.



Sarah T. Igisaiar

The daughter of Casimiro and Sachary Igisaiar, this 17-year-old Kagman High School student represents the Chuukese community of the CNMI.

Lady Sarah aims to become a successful businesswoman. She joined the contest to test her independence. Her platform deals with various educational issues, including the lack of books and facilities.

Igisaiar describes her view on CNMI Liberation as a time for everyone to gather and recognize the various ethnicities and cultures in the CNMI.



Sweeda Narita Glad

Lady Sweeda, daughter of Joyce and Tony Glad, is currently attending Mount Carmel School. She has been involved with school activities, playing the lead character in the 2004 MCS Drama Production "Taming the Shrew." This 5'9" candidate said she joined the royal court to promote the CNMI, making it known that we should be proud of our origins. She represents the Indian community.



Heather O. Woodruff

Lady Heather is the daughter of Stephen and Debbie Woodruff. She aspires to be a lawyer or doctor. She

represents the Palauan community and is sponsored by the Palauan Community Association.

She sees her role in the royal court as uniting cultures and promoting the island.

As to what CNMI Liberation symbolizes for her, Woodruff said it means, "to be free from

bondage and restraint, and to know and understand that all men and women are equal...no matter what your race or culture is."

Her platform includes dealing with drug abuse among teenagers.



Monarie R. Cabrera

At 17 years of age, Lady Monarie, the daughter of Juliana R. Olkeriil, sees her experience through the Liberation Day Royal Court as an opportunity to meet new people and "open up to the public."

She represents the Kagman High School JROTC and disclosed that her goals include graduating from high school, studying in the field of education, and becoming a teacher.

Among the issues that caught her attention is teen pregnancy. Her platform includes addressing the issue as a spokesperson for teen pregnancy prevention.



Sheyvonne Judy Aldan

Lady Sheyvonne, student of Kagman

High School, represents the Chamorro community in the 2004 Miss Liberation. Encouraged by family members, Aldan wants to make a difference in the CNMI by focusing on the youth. She wants to take part in addressing the issues that teens are now facing in society.

When asked what CNMI Liberation means for her, Aldan said it is the day we celebrate equal rights for both men and women.



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MTV Movie Award rehearsals full of bling



Actress Lindsay Lohan playfully hides her face from the camera during a rehearsal for the MTV Movie Awards, Thursday, June 3, 2004, at the Sony Studios in Culver City, Calif.

By **ANTHONY BREZNICAN**
AP ENTERTAINMENT WRITER

The fire-breathing metallic bat made the pretend Paris Hilton and substitute Snoop Dogg visibly nervous.

During rehearsals Thursday for the MTV Movie Awards, the two celebrity stand-ins cringed as six feet of fire hissed overhead from the gigantic creature's mouth. Meanwhile, host Lindsay Lohan stood safely offstage amid empty seats, telling The Associated Press about the fabulous diamonds she plans to wear on the big night.

"It's going to be a lot of diamonds, a lot of bling. I'm rocking the diamonds. And it changes with each outfit," said the "Mean Girls" star. There are six outfits, including a little beaded dress that is her favorite.

That mixture of the glamorous and the grotesque defines the annual MTV Hollywood bash, which seems to mock the year in film as much as celebrate it.

Yes, there may be a little man in a goblin suit capering inside a cage/podium—but the stars will just act cool when they accept their awards Saturday night.

"We try to be irreverent. We try to add some comedy and flavor," producer Salli Frattini said. "With the Oscars, things are very serious and this is the biggest moment of (a star's) life, but by

winning an (MTV) award, you know you mean something to the younger audience out there."

Presenters include The Rock, Vin Diesel, Jimmy Fallon, Kate Hudson and Kirsten Dunst, with Eminem and his D12 group, the Beastie Boys and the Yeah Yeah Yeahs among the bands scheduled to perform. It will be taped at the Sony studio lot for broadcast June 10 at 9 p.m. EDT.

"Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl" has the most MTV Movie Award nominations with six, including best movie and best on-screen team for co-stars Johnny Depp and Orlando Bloom.

The offbeat awards include categories for best kiss, best villain and best fight.

Another signature of the show is its short films—often parodies of big movies like "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy, "The Matrix" or "Spider-Man." But according to producer Joel Gallen, who oversees those segments, there will be no parodies this year. "It's a weird year," he lamented. "We didn't find a movie that was the perfect movie to parody."

Instead he opted for some original routines, with Will Ferrell as his pompous character from the upcoming "Anchorman" comedy interviewing a range of celebrities, and Lohan tangling with prank phone calls.

How much of the show comes to-

gether in the final days?

"About 80 percent," said Gallen, who has produced it 12 times. "Like today and tomorrow it all comes together. All the sudden you realize, 'We've got a show to do Saturday.' We spent a lot of time the past few weeks making our little pre-tapes and our films, and a lot of this stuff now is about the lighting, the structure of how the presenters will go out, and I make sure, with the writers, that they have something to say."

Is there a trick to writing lines for Tom Cruise, Tobey Maguire and Jamie Foxx?

"We try and make it simple and to the point and not too cringy," he said. "Sometimes award show patter can be cringy."

Another thing still up in the air? The little goblin they planned to have inside the presenter's podium—which was a barrel-shaped cage.

Gabriel Pimental, the 2-foot-11 actor playing the gargoyle, said he looked forward to handing out the awards and acting menacing—but the producers still weren't sure how it would look.

Lohan was nervous about hosting the event solo, but said she would feel better when the audience was full.

"It's a little weird, but it's going to be so different when everyone's here," she said. "Doing it without anyone is sort of a tease."

Telecast takes viewers to Titanic's grave

NEW YORK (AP)—If a penny saved is a penny earned, on Monday you can earn yourself a cool \$30,000. That's been the going price to plunge 12,000 feet to the North Atlantic seabed for a glimpse of the Titanic through the peephole of a cramped submersible.

But Monday at 9 p.m. EDT, you can get a good look at the RMS Titanic on live TV. You won't have to leave the house. And it won't cost you a cent.

Maybe you're feeling richer already!

Airing on the National Geographic Channel, "Return to Titanic" will take you on a scientific quest led by Robert Ballard, the marine explorer who found the sunken ruins of that luxury liner nearly 20 years ago and has

since been championing her cause.

"This is a Super Bowl with 14 live cameras," said Ballard, seeming almost as excited by the technology as by the expedition's overriding purpose.

But the real reason for the 11-day mission, he hastened to add during a recent chat, calls for scientists to map the ship and measure its deterioration since he last visited with a film crew a year after its discovery on Sept. 1, 1985.

The 32-member expedition team is already hard at work gathering and analyzing video of the wreckage from aboard the Ronald H. Brown. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration research vessel is now positioned over the site some 325

miles off the coast of Newfoundland. "Return to Titanic" will originate from there, with ABC correspondent Jay Schadler on deck as host.

But the most thrilling part of the hour-long program is sure to be live transmissions from the bottom of the sea, courtesy of multiple cameras peering the wreckage from a trio of robotic vehicles dubbed Hercules, Little Herc and Argus.

Dispatched to inspect the Titanic from various perspectives (including interior probes), these remote-controlled devices are tethered to the Ronald H. Brown by fiber-optic cable, with their high-definition video beamed to the watching world by satellite.

MOVIE REVIEW

Harry Potter 3: A wondrous fantasy

By **MICHAEL SRAGOW**
THE BALTIMORE SUN

With "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban," director Alfonso Cuarón has wrought a wondrous fantasy that's light on its feet and full of heart. This movie targets the funny bone and tingles the spine. Maybe the prosaic doggedness of the first two "Harry Potter" films (directed by Chris Columbus) was necessary to prime the books' fans for the bop, boogie and ballet of the third.

Must you know the entire saga before you can soar with this picture's flights of action poetry or dance to its zesty narrative rhythms? Not really—just the basics.

Harry (Daniel Radcliffe), the orphan son of wizards, still spends the summer with his grotesquely stuffy non-wizard aunt and uncle. They put him down at every turn despite his renown in the magic world for withstanding the dreaded Lord Voldemort (a.k.a. "You-Know-Who") ever since that paragon of evil killed Harry's parents.

In this third of a projected seven installments, the major menace is the renegade sorcerer Sirius Black (Gary Oldman), Voldemort's presumed successor, who escaped from Azkaban prison and tracks Harry all the way into Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. But Harry's more immediate threats are "dementors": Grim Reaper-like creatures from Azkaban who are supposed to protect Hogwarts students from Black but instead threaten to suck the soul right out of Harry.

Harry's blue-eyed soul in all its comical, touching glory is what this Potter adventure is about.

From the opening scenes of Harry in the purgatory of Aunt Petunia and Uncle Vernon's house, director Cuarón and his screenwriter, Steve Kloves, place you behind this growing boy's spectacles with an ease that is ticklish and mind-opening. The perfect slapstick timing, the droll performances from Richard E. Griffiths and Fiona Shaw (as Vernon and Petunia Dursley), Harry Melling (as their son Dudley) and Pam Ferris as another awful relative, Aunt Marge, and the offhand virtuosity of the

special effects contribute to making this introductory sequence a coup. But the key to its success is Cuarón's intuitive genius for putting himself on an adolescent wavelength (as he did in the vastly different, sexually charged "Y Tu Mama Tambien").

In "The Prisoner of Azkaban," Harry gets to know more about himself as he learns more about his parents. He acquires a firmer grip on the world when he sees that adults are as complex (or simple) as children and just as prone to dissembling and japey (or perilous rigidity). Harry must keep his wits about him while he and everyone around him appear to be transforming (or standing unnaturally still). Think of the movie as a black-comic version of Kipling's *If* done as a musical round for Harry and his best friends, Ron (Rupert Grint) and Hermione (Emma Watson).

Give Columbus credit for casting these young actors: They've grown into resourceful and magnetic performers. Radcliffe sounds unexpected depths of rage, remorse and euphoria, while Grint turns growing pains into comic grist and Watson displays the focused power of a heartbreaker-in-the-making.

No director has ever made more casual and well-timed use of special effects. There's alchemy in the mobile detail-work, such as the animated Sirius Black "Wanted" posters and the kinetic paintings that line the Hogwarts walls and the knight that keeps crashing into Hogwarts' grand hall. There are sustained blasts of wit, such as a sequence set in the all-wizard town of Hogsmeade, which encapsulates "The Nightmare Before Christmas" in five minutes.

Cuarón's visualization of the half-horse, half-eagle hippogriff is a pinnacle of movie magic. When Harry rides the creature through the air and it races its talons across the surface of a lake, the director achieves with special effects what Carroll Ballard did with natural beauty in the island scenes of "The Black Stallion." Kloves' script is polished and compressed—a diamond out of the rough. The way he and Cuarón handle a trick time-hopping climax puts art house hits like "Memento" and "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind" to shame.



Rupert Grint, Emma Watson and Daniel Radcliffe in Warner Brothers' "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban."

Rock band Creed breaks up after 3 albums

NEW YORK (AP)—The spiritually inclined band Creed, whose anthemic hits “Higher” and “With Arms Wide Open” helped them become one of the top-selling rock acts of the past decade, has called it quits.

Three former Creed members immediately announced they were forming a new band—minus singer Scott Stapp—but were quick to say it was not “just Creed with a different singer.”

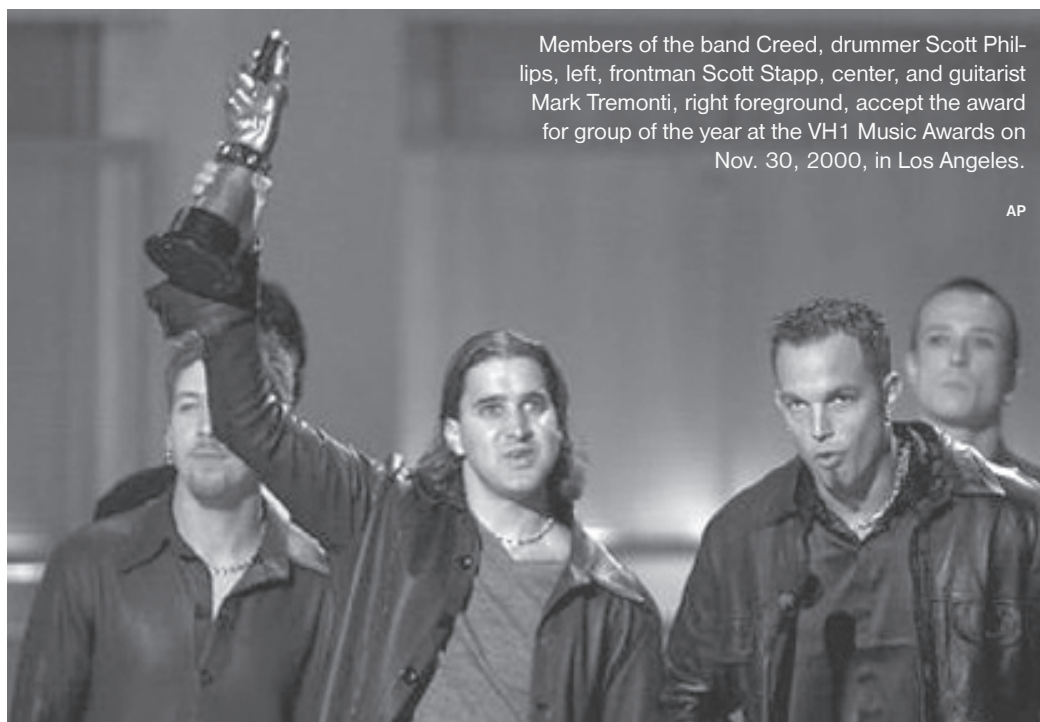
Creed’s three albums sold a combined 24 million copies in the United States. While many critics dismissed them as pale Pearl Jam imitators, Creed members used that as creative fuel and laughed all the way to the bank.

Lyricist Stapp grew up with a strict religious upbringing and often explored those topics in song. At one point five of the first eight queries on the “frequently asked questions” section of the Florida-based band’s Web site dealt with Christianity, including “Is Creed a Christian band?”

The band always said no.

Stapp and guitarist Mark Tremonti were longtime friends and songwriting partners whose relationship soured in the past couple of years, as Tremonti explained in a recent interview with MTV.com.

That caused tension in the



Members of the band Creed, drummer Scott Phillips, left, frontman Scott Stapp, center, and guitarist Mark Tremonti, right foreground, accept the award for group of the year at the VH1 Music Awards on Nov. 30, 2000, in Los Angeles.

AP

band. “There was a lot more drama,” drummer Scott Phillips told The Associated Press on Friday. “It wasn’t necessarily created by anyone in particular. It just stopped being fun.”

Stapp was not available for comment, said a spokesman for Wind-up Records.

Creed took most of last year off, and reconvened in the winter to come up with new material. “The vibe just wasn’t the same,” Phillips said.

Still, they weren’t about to casually disband such a successful unit. The band had initially figured on taking a hiatus, but a side project was working out so well they decided not to turn back, Phillips said.

The new band, Alter Bridge, features Tremonti, Phillips and former Creed bassist Brian Marshall. Singer-songwriter Myles Kennedy, formerly of the band Mayfield Four, was recruited as the fourth member. Their first

album is due out in August.

Phillips described the music as edgier than Creed, with the musicians given more space to show off their chops.

“We don’t want to make it seem like it’s just Creed with a different singer,” he said.

Stapp’s first solo recording will be on a soundtrack of music inspired by the film “The Passion of the Christ.” He’s working on a solo album with the Canadian band the Tea Party.

‘Idol’ Barrino to sing at Fashion Awards

NEW YORK (AP)—“American Idol” winner Fantasia Barrino will perform at next week’s 2004 CFDA Fashion Awards. Some 400 designers, editors, retailers and guests are expected to attend the Council of Fashion Designers of America Awards, to be presented Monday at The New York Public Library.

Barrino will perform a song “selected especially” for the evening, which will salute the city of New York, the CFDA said in a statement Thursday.

Her first single, “I Believe,” comes out June 22 on J Records. It will feature two other songs she performed during the “Idol” competition: Gershwin’s “Summertime” and Aretha



AP

“American Idol” winner Fantasia Barrino is emotional after finishing her last performance during the finale of the music competition show Tuesday, May 25, 2004, at the Kodak Theatre in the Hollywood section of Los Angeles.

Producer to build soundstage in Budapest

BUDAPEST, Hungary (AP)—Hollywood producer Andy Vajna and Hungarian construction mogul Sandor Demjan have announced plans to build the world’s largest soundstage and a new film studio on a former army base outside Budapest.

The \$184 million studio, set

to be completed by the end of 2005, will be built in the village of Etyek, 20 miles southwest of the capital.

The studio will have seven soundstages, including a “superstage” of more than 65,000 square feet with a huge water tank, Vajna said Wednesday.

That stage would be the biggest in the world, Vajna said.

The studio, which will cover more than 20 acres, will be named after Alexander Korda, a Hungarian-born filmmaker who in 1942 became the first member of the British movie industry to receive a knighthood.

Rev. Sharpton joining CNBC as commentator

NEW YORK (AP)—Rev. Al Sharpton is joining CNBC as a political commentator for its coverage of the upcoming Democratic and Republican National Conventions, the network announced Thursday.

The outspoken civil rights leader and former candidate for the 2004 presidential

nomination will share his views on “Capital Report,” “Dennis Miller” and the new “McEnroe” (scheduled to premiere in July), among other CNBC shows.

“Having run for the Democratic nomination, Rev. Sharpton brings to our viewers an insider’s perspective on presi-

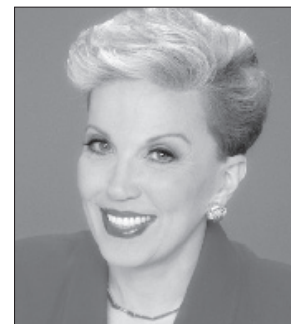
dential politics,” said Cheryl Gould, supervisor of CNBC’s political coverage.

Sharpton, a 49-year-old New York native, was ordained as a minister when he was 10, and has long reigned as a social activist and media personality. In December, he was guest host of “Saturday Night Live.”

Neighbors’ friendship may founder on son’s misdeeds

By AVIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: We are good friends with our neighbors the “Smiths.” Our oldest son is their youngest son’s best friend. The problem is their oldest son, “Joey.” Tonight we came home to find that Joey had broken into our garage and stolen the liquor we had stored there. When Mr. and Mrs. Smith confronted him, he took off.



This is not the first time Joey has vandalized our home or stolen from us, and we are fed up. It would be sad to sacrifice our relationship with his parents, but we don’t know what else to do.

Should we press charges? Or would that open a whole new can of worms with Joey? Do you think he might take his anger out on our kids? I don’t know what’s best. Part of me wants to throw the book at him; part of me is afraid of the repercussions. What would you do?

HAD ENOUGH IN MINNESOTA

DEAR HAD ENOUGH: I’d make my decision based on the number of times Joey had acted out. Since this is not the first time he has vandalized your home or stolen from you, I’d put the Smiths on notice that if anything further happens, the police will be involved. Their son is in serious need of counseling and possibly drug rehabilitation. Also, he needs to learn that there are serious consequences for his actions. If he threatens your children, it may be necessary to get a restraining order.

DEAR ABBY: My husband, “Roger,” has some unusual “hobbies” that I don’t know how to handle. He owns more than 24 cars. None of them run; they just sit and rot. He buys old airplanes, although he doesn’t know how to fly—and they, too, sit rusting away. He also collects cardboard boxes and anything in bulk. A few months ago, he bought 23 16-by-20 picture frames simply because they were on sale.

Roger ignores me. Unless I initiate a conversation, he does not talk. He won’t talk to anyone; he just sits and reads.

With the promise of a new home as bait, he moved us out of state into a trailer park. But all our money has been spent on old vehicles.

Abby, my husband comes from a nice, well-to-do family. Roger has a college education and works for a large company, but sometimes I think he would like to be a hermit. What can I do?

LIVING LIKE A HERMIT IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR LIVING: Talk to an attorney who specializes in family law and find out what your rights as a wife are in the state of California. Your husband appears to be eccentric by conventional standards, and possibly should be evaluated. If he won’t consent to the evaluation, then please discuss it with his “nice, well-to-do family.” But don’t be surprised if they are already aware of it. These quirks have been known to run in families.

DEAR ABBY: Prom season is upon us. Thousands of beautiful gowns and handsome tuxes will be bought or rented.

Please suggest to your young readers that they can get more mileage out of those beautiful outfits by planning and presenting a fashion show or a tea for a local retirement home. Seniors in these facilities would love to see the girls in their gowns and the young men in their tuxes. This will not only bring back memories for the seniors, but will bring the “outside” and “inside” communities together in a way that will bring joy to young and old alike.

PAT BRIDGES, TOPEKA, KAN.

DEAR PAT: What a delightful idea for a school club project. All it would take is someone with the willingness and skill to coordinate the event, and I’m sure the “models” would enjoy strutting their stuff. Perhaps the parents could split the cost of the tea, cookies or cake.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order “How to Have a Lovely Wedding.” Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)



AP

Actor Ben Affleck, wearing a Boston Red Sox cap, takes part in benefit charity bowling event at the Town Line Ten Pin in Malden, Mass. Monday, May 24, 2004.

Ben Affleck hospitalized for bronchitis

NEW YORK (AP)—Ben Affleck missed the London premiere of “Jersey Girl” this week because he was hospitalized in Boston for severe bronchitis, his New York-based publicist confirmed Friday.

The 31-year-old actor had been hospitalized at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center but was now recuperating at his Boston home, Ken Sunshine told AP Radio.

The London screening of the film, directed by Kevin Smith, took place Wednesday night. “Jersey Girl,” which included a cameo by Affleck’s former fiancée, Jennifer Lopez, reaped just \$8.3 million in its March debut.

Smith killed off Lopez’s character minutes into the movie after last summer’s bomb, “Gigli,” which also paired Affleck and Lopez.

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Coria rallies to top Henman in French Open

By **HOWARD FENDRICH**
AP TENNIS WRITER



PARIS (AP)—For 1 1/2 sets Friday, Tim Henman seemed poised to upset clay-court star Guillermo Coria and become the first Englishman in a French Open final since the 1930s. His serving on, his volleys crisp, Henman parlayed an hour of spectacular play on his least favorite surface into a big lead against Coria. Then, suddenly, everything changed. Coria took 13 straight games, staved off a late comeback bid, and won 3-6, 6-4, 6-0, 7-5, setting up the first all-Argentine Grand Slam final.

Appropriately, No. 3 Coria's opponent Sunday will be an unseeded player, Gaston Gaudio, a 6-3, 7-6 (5), 6-0 winner over yet another Argentine, No. 8 David Nalbandian.

"It never crossed my mind that I could lose," said Coria, a 2003 French Open semifinalist and winner of 37 of his last 38 matches on clay.

When he finished off Henman, the 1999 Roland Garros junior champion walked off the court quickly, saying later, "It would be crazy to start celebrating now, because Gaudio has exactly the same dream as me: He wants to win the French Open."

Neither Coria, 22, nor Gaudio, 25, ever has played in a major final. One will be the French Open's 11th first-time Slam champion in 16 years—and the first Argentine man to win a major title since Guillermo Vilas at the 1979 Australian Open. Both have been mentored by Vilas; Coria was named after him.

"It's not because of me. They have done the hard work," said Vilas, who watched the semifinals from a third-row seat. "If I contributed something, then I'm happy."

Similarly, Saturday's women's final between No. 6 Anastasia Myskina and No. 9 Elena Dementieva will be the first all-Russian championship match at a major. They are making Slam final debuts, too; no Russian woman has won a major title.



Guillermo Coria of Argentina returns the ball to Tim Henman of Britain during their semifinal match of the French Open tennis tournament at the Roland Garros stadium in Paris, Friday, June 4, 2004.

Britain's last male champion at a Grand Slam tournament was Fred Perry at Wimbledon in 1936—something Henman is reminded of repeatedly as he comes oh-so-close on the All England Club's grass. He's been a semifinalist there four times, going 0-4.

Perry could play on clay, too, winning the 1935 French Open, losing in the final the next year. Another Briton, Bunny Austin, was the runner-up in Paris in 1937.

Henman, a serve-and-volleyer, never

had been beyond the fourth round at another major until this week, and only 13 percent of his career match wins were on clay. Balls move slower than on grass or hard courts, giving opponents more time to calibrate shots, making it tough to charge to the net.

The French Open bedeviled attacking players from John McEnroe to Boris Becker to Stefan Edberg to Pete Sampras, who won a record 14 majors but only once made it as far as the semifinals in Paris.

But Henman—now working with Sampras' former coach, Paul Annacone—managed to put it all together for five matches. Against Coria, who hadn't lost a set in the tournament, Henman went ahead 6-3, 4-2 by playing flawlessly, even matching Coria stroke-for-stroke from the baseline.

"Playing the best clay-court player in the world, I make him look pretty ordinary," Henman said. "But it's a question of being able to do that for a long, long time."

Serving at 4-3 in the second set, Henman went ahead 30-15 with a leaping overhead smash a la Sampras. And then, much to his dismay, Henman really began channeling Sampras on clay, dumping volleys into the net, moving a step too slowly, hanging his head after errors.

Coria's passing shots started finding their marks, punctuated with shouts of "Vamos!"

"I was very focused. He seemed a little lost," said Coria, who served a seventh-month drug suspension in 2001-02 for the steroid nandrolone and now is suing the maker of the dietary supplement he was taking.

With Coria up 3-0 in the fourth set, fans aching for a dramatic semifinal began rooting raucously for Henman. The women's matches Thursday and Gaudio's win all finished in straight sets with little flair.

"To have that support away from home is a little strange," said Henman, who won five straight games for a 5-3 edge.

But serving for the set at 5-4, he double-faulted, couldn't answer Coria's deep forehand that skipped off the baseline, then pushed a volley out to get broken. That was part of a four-game, match-ending run for Coria, praised by Henman for "his speed, his athleticism, his consistency from the baseline."

Like Coria, Gaudio prefers clay. He's never been past the third round at another major, and his career winning percentage on clay (.665) is far better than on all other surfaces combined (.402).

Ranked 44th, Gaudio last won a title in 2002, and he's been working with a psychologist. He got lost in the tiebreaker against Nalbandian, though, serving from the wrong side of the court. No one noticed until Nalbandian put a return into the net.

Nalbandian complained to the chair umpire.

"I made history," Gaudio said, smiling. "It's the first time something like that happened in the French Open."

Just one of many firsts this year.

Mud won't derail Smarty Jones at Belmont

By **RICHARD ROSENBLATT**
AP RACING WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—So what if rain is forecast for the Belmont Stakes? Smarty Jones has already splashed to victory through pools of mud at the Kentucky Derby.

Think the grueling 1 1/2-mile oval may prove too long for him? He's finished his last two races with stamina to spare!

On Saturday, millions will watch to see whether the brilliant, undefeated 3-year-old colt can become racing's first Triple Crown winner in 26 years.

"He's training like a machine," trainer John Servis said Friday after Smarty Jones jogged around the track at Belmont Park. "I don't see him having any problem with a mile-and-a-half. He's ready. He knows it's coming close. He realizes it's time to dance."

Eight other horses will be ready, too, looking to thwart Smarty's bid to become the first horse to win the Triple

Crown since Affirmed in 1978.

Of the 28 horses that have entered the Belmont with a chance at the Triple, 17 have failed, including five in the last seven years.

Charismatic broke his leg during the race in 1999, War Emblem stumbled out of the gate in 2002, and Funny Cide floundered in the mud last year. And in 1979, heavily favored Spectacular Bid lost after stepping on a safety pin the morning of the Belmont.

Jason Orman, who saddles Rock Hard Ten, said the rain adds an element of surprise to every race.

"You never know how they'll handle it," he said.

The rain alone shouldn't be enough to keep Smarty Jones from making history before an expected crowd of more than 100,000. He does well on wet tracks, winning the Arkansas Derby on mud before doing the same at a drenched Churchill Downs.

Forecasters predicted a 60 percent chance of rain at the 6:38 p.m. post time.

"I know that my horse is a good horse, and he'll run on anything," Servis said.

"The country has been waiting for a Triple Crown winner, and I know now why there haven't been many. The American people have fallen in love with this horse."

Seven months ago, no one outside Philadelphia Park had ever heard of Smarty Jones. Now he's the 2-5 favorite in the race that could make him just the 12th Triple Crown winner.

Since slamming his head on an iron bar at a starting gate last summer, fracturing his skull and almost dying, Smarty has been overpowering in winning all eight of his races under the patient and poised riding of Stewart Elliott.

And the undersized red chestnut colt seems to be getting stronger. Three weeks ago, the Pennsylvania-bred horse owned by Pat and Roy Chapman won the Preakness by a record 11 1/2 lengths, just two weeks after beating 17 rivals in the Kentucky Derby.

Still, the Belmont has a way of making a favorite look like anything but one.

"Let's face it, we've got a bull's-eye on our back," Servis said. "There are going to be some things happening in this race that are going to be totally uncharacteristic for a normal race, and Stewart is going to have to get through that."

Things have fallen into place so well for Team Smarty that rain might actually increase the colt's chances of joining Seattle Slew as the only unbeaten Triple Crown winners.

Among the rivals Smarty Jones will face, Birdstone (15-1) and Master David (20-1) ran poorly over the slop at Churchill Downs, while Purge (5-1) was second in the Arkansas Derby.

Rock Hard Ten (8-1) and Eddington (10-1), who finished second and third, respectively, in the Preakness, have run only on fast tracks. Royal Assault (20-1) has never raced on a sloppy track. The two 50-1 long shots—Caiman and Tap Dancer—haven't run on wet tracks, either.

Trainer Mark Hennig said Eddington has trained well over a sloppy track. "We might be better trying him in the mud," he said.

With a victory Saturday, Smarty Jones would do more than join the sport's most elite club. He'd also become the richest racehorse in North America, with earnings topping \$13 million.

Smarty's bankroll stands at \$7.4 million. He would earn a \$5 million bonus for winning the Triple Crown, plus the Belmont winner's purse of \$600,000. Total haul: \$13,013,155.

The money, though, is only a small part of the Smarty Jones story. Racing fans are desperate for a superstar, for some remarkable colt to end the long, long Triple Crown drought.

"It's just such an electric moment," said Patrice Wolfson, owner of Affirmed. "To non-racing people, it's a happening. To racing people, it's just the second coming. And we really need it. I so hope that he wins."

Curtis, Rose rise to the top at Memorial



DUBLIN, Ohio (AP)—Ben Curtis brought his British Open trophy to the Memorial Tournament for a little motivation and it appears to be working after he retained a share of the lead on Friday.

Curtis feels so confident about his game that he took aim at the flag on the 18th hole and walked off with a birdie, giving him a 3-under 69 and a co-lead with Justin Rose and Stephen Ames after two rounds.

“Looking at that thing gives you goosebumps,” Curtis said of the claret jug, which he won last year at Royal St. George’s as the 396th player in the world ranking.

Seeing his name atop the leaderboard isn’t bad, either.

Despite greens that were even faster and swirling winds that grew stronger, Curtis navigated Muirfield Village without a bogey for the second straight day to wind up at 7-under 137.

“Having no bogeys ... the last two days is a reflection of how I’ve been playing,” he said.

Tiger Woods gave himself a chance for a fourth title at the Memorial. De-

spite a double bogey on the par-3 12th that killed his momentum, Woods shot 68 and was three shots off the lead.

Jack Nicklaus showed some life, too. The 64-year-old tournament host was robbed of an ace on No. 12, but still managed a 1-over 73 and made the cut.

“That’s a pretty decent round of golf for an old man,” Nicklaus said.

Rose, 23, looked as if he would have the lead to himself until he chopped the 18th hole and took double bogey, ruining an otherwise brilliant round. He settled for a 67 to match the best score of the tournament and put him in the final group with Curtis on Saturday.

Rose had the 36-hole lead at the Masters, but then soared to an 81 in the third round. The young Englishman believes that will help him down the road, maybe even this week.

“I learned halfway is nowhere,” he said. “Thinking about winning, or thinking about leading, is irrelevant really.”

Ames, who took a double bogey on the 18th to cost him the lead Thursday, this time finished in style hitting his approach into 4 feet for a birdie on the final hole and a 68.

“I was really happy with the way things turned out,” Ames said.

The trio had a one-shot lead over Ernie Els (70), K.J. Choi (67) and Fred Couples, whose round of 69 could have been better considering his seven birdies and an eagle, or a lot worse considering his start.

Couples opened with three straight bogeys, then turned it around by chipping in for eagle and birdie on consecutive holes. He made three straight birdies on the back nine to take the lead, then gave it away with a three-putt from 6 feet on No. 17 for double bogey.

“However you get to 69 ... I mean, I could have made four birdies and a bogey,” Couples said. “I’m not so sure I’d be better off to do what I did, because I hit some real good shots. And that’s what I’ve been looking for.”

The craziest shot of the day belonged to Nicklaus.

His tee shot over the water on No. 12 was perfect all the way—too perfect, in fact. It flew straight into the cup with such force that it ricocheted off the metal bottom, shot 20 feet into the air and settled on the fringe.

Yankees defeat Rangers, 7-6



NEW YORK (AP)—Gary Sheffield hit two homers and Alex Rodriguez had another as the New York Yankees overcame Alfonso Soriano’s triumphant return to the Bronx with a 7-6 victory over the Texas Rangers on Friday night.

Staked to a four-run lead, Rangers starter Kenny Rogers allowed five home runs to the Yankees, who have won 10 of 11.

“The sky’s the limit for this team,” Sheffield said. “We’re starting to hit our stride.”

Derek Jeter left in the fourth inning with a tight left groin, and the Yankees said their captain was day to day.

Royals 5, Red Sox 2

In Kansas City, Missouri, Jimmy Gobble pitched six strong innings, retiring 15 consecutive batters during one stretch to lead Kansas City to a victory over struggling Boston.

The 22-year-old left-hander gave up two runs on five hits, with no walks and one strikeout. Jeremy Afeldt pitched a perfect ninth for his sixth save in seven chances.

Twins 3, Tigers 2

In Minneapolis, Torii Hunter’s solo homer with one out in the bottom of the ninth inning gave Minnesota a victory over Detroit.

Hunter hit a 2-2 pitch from reliever Jamie Walker (0-2) over the left-center fence for his eighth homer of the season.

Devil Rays 8, Orioles 7, 11 innings

In Baltimore, Julio Lugo led off the 11th with his fourth hit and scored on a pinch-hit single by Fred McGriff, leading Tampa Bay past Baltimore.

Tino Martinez hit a three-run homer for the Devil Rays, who blew a five-run lead before rallying to force extra innings.

Indians 9, Angels 6

In Anaheim, California, Ronnie Beliard gave Cleveland the lead with his first homer of the season, a three-run

shot in the eighth inning off Francisco Rodriguez, as the Indians rallied from four runs down to beat Anaheim.

Blue Jays 6, Athletics 1

In Oakland, California, Eric Hinske hit a tiebreaking homer in the eighth inning and a two-run double in the ninth as Toronto thrashed Oakland.

Toronto scored five runs in the final two innings to snap Oakland’s eight-game home winning streak. The A’s won the last five of those games in extra innings.

White Sox 4, Mariners 2

In Seattle, Jon Garland pitched into the eighth inning and Frank Thomas hit a go-ahead two-run homer to lead Chicago over Seattle.

The AL Central-leading White Sox ended a two-game losing streak, while the last-place Mariners lost their third game in a row.

Pirates 2, Cubs 1

In Chicago, Mark Prior retired the first 13 batters and pitched six stellar innings for Chicago, but the Pittsburgh Pirates rallied for two runs in the ninth.

Chicago lost for the eighth time in 11 games when the Cubs’ bullpen blew a 1-0 lead. Jack Wilson doubled off Joe Borowski (2-4) and scored on Craig Wilson’s two-out single to tie it. Pinch-hitter Chris Stynes then hit a go-ahead single off Mike Remlinger.

Phillies 9, Braves 1

In Atlanta, Bobby Abreu and Mike Lieberthal homered to back seven impressive innings by Eric Milton as Philadelphia beat Atlanta to end a four-game losing streak.

Milton (7-1) held the Braves scoreless after the first inning, allowing just one earned run and five hits overall. The left-hander struck out five and walked two.

Marlins 5, Mets 1

In New York, Hee Seop Choi hit a go-ahead sacrifice fly in the sixth inning and Miguel Cabrera had three hits as Florida ended a four-game losing streak with a win over New York.

Carl Pavano (5-2) allowed six hits over 7 2-3 innings, and retired 12 straight during one stretch as the Marlins ended New York’s four-game winning streak.

Expos 4, Reds 2

In Cincinnati, Brad Wilkerson hit a solo homer and a tiebreaking, two-run shot in the seventh inning, rallying Montreal past Cincinnati.

The Reds had their biggest walk-up crowd since they started keeping track of the statistic in 1987.

Cardinals 5, Astros 3

In St. Louis, Scott Rolen snapped a fifth-inning tie with a two-run single, giving him a major league-leading 57 RBIs and sending St. Louis past Houston.

The Cardinals have won five in a row and eight of nine to pull within a game of NL Central-leading Cincinnati.

Giants 13, Rockies 7

In Denver, Barry Bonds hit his 673rd home run and Jason Schmidt won his seventh straight decision, leading San Francisco over Colorado.

A.J. Pierzynski and Dustan Mohr each hit a three-run homer, and Neifi Perez also connected for the Giants.

Dodgers 7, Diamondbacks 3

In Phoenix, Paul Lo Duca hit a three-run homer and Milton Bradley, playing while appealing a four-game suspension, drove in two runs to help Los Angeles beat Arizona for its fifth win in six games.

Kazuhisa Ishii (7-3), who shut out the Diamondbacks on Sunday, overcame six walks and improved to 5-1 against Arizona. He allowed three runs on four hits.

Brewers 3, Padres 1

In San Diego, Geoff Jenkins had two RBI doubles as Milwaukee found Petco Park’s quirkiness to their liking in defeating San Diego.

The first four of the Brewers’ eight hits went for extra bases in the spacious downtown ballpark.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division				
	W	L	Pct	G
New York	34	19	.642	-
Boston	31	23	.574	3 1/2
Baltimore	24	27	.471	9
Toronto	25	30	.455	10
Tampa Bay	21	32	.396	13

Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	G
Chicago	30	22	.577	-
Minnesota	29	25	.537	2
Detroit	24	30	.444	7
Cleveland	23	29	.442	7
Kansas City	20	32	.385	10

West Division				
	W	L	Pct	G
Anaheim	33	21	.611	-
Texas	29	23	.558	3
Oakland	29	24	.547	3 1/2
Seattle	19	34	.358	13 1/2

Yesterday's Games				
N.Y. Yankees	7	Texas	6	
Tampa Bay	8	Baltimore	7	11 innings
Minnesota	3	Detroit	2	
Kansas City	5	Boston	2	
Chicago White Sox	4	Seattle	2	
Cleveland	9	Anaheim	6	
Toronto	6	Oakland	1	

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division				
	W	L	Pct	G
Florida	31	24	.564	-
Philadelphia	28	25	.528	2
Atlanta	27	27	.500	3 1/2
New York	27	27	.500	3 1/2
Montreal	18	35	.340	12

Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	G
Cincinnati	32	22	.593	-
St. Louis	31	23	.574	1
Houston	29	24	.547	2 1/2
Milwaukee	27	25	.519	4
Chicago	27	26	.509	4 1/2
Pittsburgh	24	27	.471	6 1/2

West Division				
	W	L	Pct	G
Los Angeles	29	23	.558	-
San Diego	29	25	.537	1
San Francisco	27	27	.500	3
Arizona	21	34	.382	9 1/2
Colorado	20	33	.377	9 1/2

Yesterday's Games				
Pittsburgh	2	Chicago Cubs	1	
Florida	5	N.Y. Mets	1	
Montreal	4	Cincinnati	2	
Philadelphia	9	Atlanta	1	
St. Louis	5	Houston	3	
San Francisco	13	Colorado	7	
Milwaukee	3	San Diego	1	
Los Angeles	7	Arizona	3	

MEMORIAL SCORES

SECOND ROUND		
Justin Rose	70-67	137
Ben Curtis	68-69	137
Stephen Ames	69-68	137
K.J. Choi	71-67	138
Fred Couples	69-69	138
Ernie Els	68-70	138
Todd Hamilton	69-70	139
Tiger Woods	72-68	140
Scott McCarron	72-69	141
John Daly	72-69	141
Kevin Sutherland	71-70	141
Jay Haas	70-72	142
Zach Johnson	69-73	142
Rory Sabbatini	71-71	142
Jeff Maggert	73-69	142
Geoff Ogilvy	74-68	142
Retief Goosen	70-72	142
Shigeki Maruyama	71-71	142
Sergio Garcia	73-69	142
Lee Janzen	69-73	142
J.L. Lewis	70-72	142
Rich Beem	71-71	142
Stephen Leaney	71-71	142
John Rollins	69-74	143
Tom Lehman	74-69	143
Arron Oberholser	69-74	143
Davis Love III	70-73	143
Len Mattiace	70-73	143
Jeff Sluman	70-73	143
Craig Parry	71-72	143
Paul Azinger	69-74	143
Tommy Armour III	72-72	144
Rocco Mediate	71-73	144
Kenny Perry	72-72	144

Jerry Kelly	74-70	144
Tom Pernice Jr.	73-71	144
Tim Petrovic	75-69	144
Ted Purdy	74-70	144
Hunter Mahan	74-70	144
Billy Andrade	71-73	144
Stewart Cink	70-74	144
Peter Lonard	71-73	144
Harrison Frazar	73-72	145
Niclas Fasth	75-70	145
John Cook	71-74	145
Vijay Singh	73-72	145
Briny Baird	76-69	145
Padraig Harrington	71-74	145
Steve Flesch	72-73	145
Chad Campbell	72-73	145
Chris DiMarco	71-74	145
Trevor Immelman	73-73	146
Mark Calcavecchia	74-72	146
Frank Lickliter II	71-75	146
Dan Forsman	73-73	146
Brad Faxon	72-74	146
Shaun Micheel	73-73	146
Corey Pavin	71-75	146
Jesper Parnevik	75-71	146
Keiichiro Fukabori	72-74	146
Jack Nicklaus	74-73	147
Nick Price	74-73	147
Stuart Appleby	73-74	147
Tim Herron	76-71	147
Woody Austin	73-74	147
Thomas Bjorn	71-76	147
Brenden Pappas	73-74	147
Skip Kendall	77-71	148
Tim Clark	73-75	148
Aaron Baddeley	74-74	148
Darren Fichardt	70-78	148
Hidemichi Tanaka	73-75	148
Robert Allenby	74-74	148
Steve Elkington	75-73	148
Mark Hensby	74-74	148
Hirofumi Miyase	73-75	148

SPORTS TRANSACTIONS

MLB
MLB—Suspended Pittsburgh manager Lloyd McClendon and St. Louis manager Tony La Russa for two games and fined them undisclosed amounts for their actions in a June 1 game.
CHICAGO WHITE SOX—Placed OF Magglio Ordonez on the 15-day DL, retroactive to May 26. Recalled C Jamie Burke from Charlotte of the IL.
SEATTLE MARINERS—Placed LF Raul Ibanez on the 15-day DL, retroactive to June 3. Recalled INF Ramon Santiago Tacoma of the PCL.
CHICAGO CUBS—Activated RHP Mark Prior from the 60-day DL and LHP Kent Mercker from the 15-day DL. Sent RHP Michael Wuertz to Iowa of the PCL. Transferred SS Alex Gonzalez from the 15- to the 60-day DL.
CINCINNATI REDS—Placed RHP Aaron Harang on the 15-day DL. Activated 3B Brandon Larson from the 15-day DL.
MONTREAL EXPOS—Activated LHP Rigo Beltran from the 15-day DL and assigned him to Edmonton of the PCL.
SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS—Optioned INF Brian Dallimore to Fresno of the PCL. Purchased the contract of INF Cody Ransom from Fresno. Released OF Jeffrey Hammonds. Recalled OF Todd Linden from Fresno.
NBA
PHILADELPHIA 76ERS—Named Lester Conner associate coach.
NFL
CINCINNATI BENGALS—Waived G Alex Sulfsted, LB Joe Siofele and TE Michael Walker.
ST. LOUIS RAMS—Signed TE Joel Jacobs, S Justin Lucas and QB Rush Michna. Released TE Spencer Nead and TE John Frieser.
College
JAMES MADISON—Named Shelia Moorman associate athletics director and senior woman administrator.
MINNESOTA STATE-MANKATO—Announced the resignation of Clarence Holley, football coach.
SANTA CLARA—Named Tom Service men’s and women’s cross country coach.
SOUTHEAST MISSOURI STATE—Name Robert Guster men’s assistant basketball coach.
SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI—Named Brooks Donald women’s assistant basketball coach.
STETSON—Announced the resignation of Jeremy Tyson, assistant baseball coach.

By The Associated Press

The Week in Sports

Championship week

By **MARK RABAGO**
REPORTER

Michael Son won a championship in tennis, while Mark Halstead also celebrated one in bowling last week. In baseball, the Saipan Little League crowned Pacifica Pirates and Ol' Aces the kings of the major and junior divisions, respectively.

Son avenged his loss to top seed Jeff Race in the men's open doubles by outplaying him in the singles final. Son

beat Race, 6-4, 4-6, 7-5, in a three-hour, 15-minute marathon Monday.

On Sunday, Halstead triumphed against 35 other bowlers to become the 22nd Annual May Masters Tournament champion. Halstead rallied to beat Ronald Epan for the title. Third-place went to Jonathan Duenas of Guam.

Pacifica Pirates, meanwhile, fashioned out a 13-10 win over Ace Hardware to lift the championship Saturday. A day later, Sunday, Ol' Aces routed the KMCV Aztecs, 15-4, to top the 13-14-year-old age group.



BRAD E. RUSZALA

Pacifica Pirates team flashes the No. 1 sign after romping away with the Saipan Major Little League championship last May 29.

BRAD E. RUSZALA

Pirates' Joey Dela Cruz, left, and Pete Tomokane get ready for their game against the Brewers Wednesday in the Saipan Major League.



MARK RABAGO

THC Foundation donated \$500 to the Saipan Walking Association Inc. Thursday. Photo shows THC Foundation's Jerry Tan handing over the replica of the \$500 check to SAIWAI vice president Yoichi Matsumura. To Tan's left is THC executive vice president for corporate affairs Lynn Knight, while to Matsumura's right is SAIWAI treasurer Mario Espeleta.



MARK RABAGO

LSG Sky Chefs swingman Ed Yalung attempts an acrobatic shot against Country House in the 2004 Inter-Restaurant Basketball League. Country House routed LSG, 73-34.

Koko Than of Keeraku dials up from three in their game against Angel Wings Thursday. Angels Wings won 79-45.

MARK RABAGO



Women's 4.0 singles runner-up Cleofe Santos tries to catch a return from eventual champion Mayuko Arriola.

MARK RABAGO



Jeff Race stretches to get a racquet on one of Son's superb groundstrokes.

MARK RABAGO



MARK RABAGO

Jonathan Hensley, May Masters all events champion, receives his trophy and cash prize from Tan and Sablan.

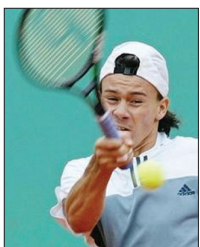
Diane Camacho shows off her women's all-events championship trophy. Flanking Camacho is Saipan Bowling Association president Jerry Tan, right, and MARPAC's Nathan Sablan.

MARK RABAGO



Michael Son gets ready to pounce on Jeff Race's serve in the championship of the men's open singles of the 2004 DFS Micronesian Tennis Championships Monday at the PIC tennis courts. Son won 6-4, 4-6, 7-5.

MARK RABAGO



Coria rallies to top Henman in French Open

For 1 1/2 sets Friday, Tim Henman seemed poised to upset clay-court star Guillermo Coria and become the first Englishman in a French Open final since the 1930s. **25**

Saipan Tribune Sports

Championship week

In baseball, the Saipan Little League crowned Pacifica Pirates and Ol'Aces the kings of the major and junior divisions, respectively. **27**



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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

The evolution of The Shark

By MARK RABAGO
REPORTER

Mark Halstead was still a little minnow when he came to realize that bowling was the sport for him.

Born on Saipan on March 29, 1965 to Robert Edward and Maria Esteves Halstead, the player local bowlers dub The Shark first picked up a bowling ball when he was only nine years old.

"My dad was in the United States Coast Guard and we were stationed in Honolulu, Hawaii. My parents wanted us to join some kind of sport and we—brother, sister and I—chose bowling."

Halstead was immediately hooked into bowling. He said he was a gifted bowler even as a beginner and didn't need much encouragement from his parents to hit the lanes and work on his game.

"I just loved the sport from the very beginning and I kind of inspired myself to excel in the game on my own."

His family eventually moved back to Saipan and Halstead continued his passion for bowling. During his high school years, life was split between Mount Carmel and the local bowling alley.

And despite brief flirtations with billiards and tennis, bowling was still his

first love. In fact, he used to swing by Saipan Bowling Center just to get a glimpse of the top bowlers of that time.

He said growing up he used to watch the likes of Joe Guerrero, Rick Sablan, and Benny Pangelinan play and wished that he was as good as they were.

Halstead would soon ascend the upper echelons of the sport on Saipan. The year was 1988. The occasion: the 6th Annual May Masters Tournament.

After topping the preliminary events—bagging the singles, and being part of the doubles and team championships to secure the all events crown—Halstead found himself trailing Rudy Palanganas going to the 16th and final game of the masters event.

Halstead poured his best in the last game and saw his work pay off when his opponent struggled with a split in the Final Frame and he won by only eight pins.

Since that breakout win, Halstead has become a familiar fixture in local bowling tournaments and leagues and has won more than his fair share of awards and accolades.

His most recent triumph was in last Sunday's 22nd Annual May Masters Tournament where he hoisted his sec-

ond masters championship trophy after coming from behind to defeat fellow lefty Ronald Epan.

"I've won so many tournaments that I cannot remember them all. I also won too many high averages that I also can't remember. But of all the leagues and tournaments, the things that really stand out are the 1988 May Masters and the time when I almost rolled a perfect game."

Halstead came close to fulfilling every bowler's dream a reality in 1996 when he entertained a score of 300 until the last frame and wound up with a 299.

"My 299 game is still one that sticks in my mind because my dream is to make a perfect 300 game and I didn't have the luck that I needed to get it. But I will still strive for it until the day I can't bowl no more."

He also holds close to his heart his victory in last February's Philippine Bowling Association Classified Bowling Tournament. Halstead said it stands as one of his proudest moments because it was the first time he copped a title in the PBA since joining the association in 1993.

Aside from bowling the elusive perfect game, Halstead doesn't really see himself setting any other goals.

"No goals, just keep trying to win as much tournaments as possible. It was really awesome to see my best friend Jonathan Hensley bowl his perfect game and all I wish is to make the 300 game myself."

In the upcoming Asian Inter-City Tenpin Bowling Championships in Sha Alam, Malaysia, Halstead doesn't want to make any predictions despite becoming the first bowler from the Mariana Islands to qualify in the masters event. He did so in last year's tournament held in Paranaque City, Philippines.

"But if I do qualify for it again, I will try to do my best for the CNMI."

Outside of the sport, Halstead has followed his dad and is a licensed U.S. Coast Guard captain. He has been working in the same tourist diving company since 1983.

Halstead spends his spare time with his family and friends. He is set to wed his fiancée Elsie Lynn Manglona Dela Cruz in October this year.

Asked why he's nicknamed The Shark, Halstead simply remarked, "it rhymes with Mark so it stuck." And with the way he gobbles up opponents in bowling, he has all the right to name himself any creature of prey.



MARK RABAGO

Halstead with his fiancée Elsie Lynn Manglona Dela Cruz and her children Travis Thomas Toshio Dela Cruz Diaz and Tomiko Florilyn Marie Dela Cruz Diaz during the May Masters Tournament awards ceremony at the Dai-Ichi Hotel Saipan Beach last Sunday. Also in photo is Halstead's godson Jonathan Jesse Ada Taitano.



Mark Halstead is still in search of the perfect game despite winning virtually all bowling awards on Saipan.

MARK RABAGO